

Search

Plan Your Trip

Go Select a Region or Country Select a Destination Go

DELTA CHANGE IS: TXTING UR FLT STATS Make the most of your time with alerts from Delta Mobile HEALTHIER MENUS MOBILE ALERTS SIGNATURE COCKTAILS

Splat! One Less Mutant to Deal With

Published: June 22, 2007

(Page 2 of 2)

"I've learned more about taking fire while on the paintball field than I did in the Marine Corps," said Mark White, a casualty of the Nerf football attack in Virginia. "It's much more fun and I get to wear my hair long."

Multimedia



Slide Show

A Weekend at War

about the tank's equipment.

With a computer and the help of a co-worker's programming skills, as well as aluminum and PVC pipe from a Home Depot, Mr. Cawthon built the tank's twin-missile firing system, which launches mini footballs up to 150 yards. In all, he estimated that he and his Dead by Dawn teammates spent more than \$8,000 on the creation, which makes it to about a half-dozen scenario games a year.

Outside the playing field, goggles came off and the atmosphere relaxed. Most teams set up camp in a grass field that was part Woodstock (without the drugs), part Nascar (without the beer) and part U.S.O. club (without Toby Keith). Players hung out by concession stands, watched videos of past games or wiped off paint and waited to be re-inserted into the game near an area one observer called the Green Zone.

Dressed in full camouflage, Bruno Vadala, a computer technician from northern New Jersey, said he discovered scenario paintball after he took his son to a birthday party at a local paintball field. Later, while giving a party for his son at the same field, Mr. Vadala said someone mentioned a local scenario game.

Four years later, Mr. Vadala and his son, now 14, are scenario regulars, and Mr. Vadala has even served as second in command for a "Vietnamese" team that beat the "Americans" at NJ Nam, an annual event at a Williamstown, N.J., airfield considered

SIGN IN TO E-MAIL OR SAVE THIS

- PRINT SINGLE PAGE REPRINTS SHARE



Great Getaways - Travel Deals by E-Mail

Sign up for travel offers from NYTimes.com's premier advertisers. See Sample | Privacy Policy Sign Up

San Francisco I F O R N Go where the locals go. explore san francisco

BOOK FLIGHTS



FLIGHT HOTEL PACKAGES CAR CRUISE ACTIVITIES Leaving from: Going to: Departing: 7/13/2007 11 AM Returning: 7/15/2007 11 AM Adults: 2 Seniors: 0 Children: 0 Search for flights

MOST POPULAR - TRAVEL

- 1. Surfacing | Boston: The Taming of Southie 2. 36 Hours in Florence 3. Frugal Traveler | American Road Trip: Into Middle America but Staying on the Fringe 4. Splat! One Less Mutant to Deal With 5. 36 Hours in Bali 6. Weekend With the Kids: Trails, Trains and a Syrup House in Woodstock, Vt. 7. Weekend In New York | Ice Cream: Small Detours for Sweet Rewards 8. Practical Traveler | Mobile Devices: A Guide to Anywhere, Right in Your Hand 9. Ahead | Surfing Contests: Water, Waves, Action 10. Journeys | Sicily: In Palermo, Life Vibrates in a Fading Market Go to Complete List >>

among the most realistic games around.

“The Americans were being dropped into the playing field by a real helicopter, there was smoke and dust everywhere, and I’m there with this guy who served in [Bosnia](#),” said Mr. Vadala, whose body is not exactly combat-ready. “We’re watching this, and he turns to me and says, ‘It looks just like the real thing.’”

He was talking about James Graham, who was also at the Virginia event and looked like he could still be in the Army.

“When you’re out there, you don’t worry about bills or your kids,” Mr. Graham said. “There’s an esprit de corps, and when you find friends in this sport, they’re your friends for a long time.”

Moments later, Mr. Graham and Mr. Vadala checked their equipment and prepared to re-enter the battlefield with several other colleagues as AC/DC played from loudspeakers overhead. In the distance, the popping of paintball guns and soldiers’ calls could be heard from the darkened woods, where the Transgenics lay in ambush.

Friendship would come in handy.

MORE PAINTBALL EVENTS

Most scenario paintball events start on a Saturday afternoon and run until well after midnight, although most players without night-vision equipment or industrial-strength flashlights opt out of night competition. Games restart on Sunday morning and usually end with a final battle in the early afternoon.

Event organizers generally use rules published by the scenario entrepreneur Patrick McKinnon and available online, at www.scenariopaintball.com.

The Invasion of Normandy, with close to 5,000 players, begins July 14 at Skirmish USA, in Jim Thorpe, Pa. (800-754-7647; www.skirmish.com).

On Aug. 11 and 12, Deadwood will be staged by Strategy Plus Paintball - Bear Swamp Road, [East Hampton](#), Conn. (www.strategyplus.com). The citizens of Deadwood will be split between those backing the saloon owner, Al Swarengen, against those aligned with his rival, Cy Tolliver.

D.E.A. vs. the Cartel II looks to be a popular late-summer event (205-672-2860; www.paintball-aaa.com). It will be held Sept. 1 and 2 at the [Alabama](#) Army National Guard’s urban training facility in Anniston, [Ala.](#)

Dates, locations and Web sites for these and other games are at www.scenariocalendar.com.

[« PREVIOUS PAGE](#) | [1](#) | [2](#)

[Next Article in Travel \(3 of 19\) »](#)

The New York Times STORE



Nineteen foot Chris-Craft Racer, 1930's.
[Buy Now](#)

Ads by Google

[what's this?](#)

[Air France Plane Travel](#)

Use Air France's Official Site To Find Best Fares Online: Book & Save
www.airfrance.com/us

[Weekly Travel Deals](#)

Air Travel Deals on the Web in One Place. Get Our Free Newsletter.

TripHounds.com/Newsletter

United: Official Site

Find Low Fares & Earn 500 Bonus Miles When You Book at united.com
www.united.com

Past Coverage

[FRUGAL TRAVELER | AMERICAN ROAD TRIP; Into Middle America but Staying on the Fringe \(June 20, 2007\)](#)
[WEEKEND IN NEW YORK | ICE CREAM; Small Detours for Sweet Rewards \(June 17, 2007\)](#)
[IN TRANSIT; The Best Hotel in Town May Now Be at the Airport \(June 17, 2007\)](#)
[IN TRANSIT; Royal Festival Hall Reopens After Facelift \(June 17, 2007\)](#)

Related Searches

[Travel and Vacations](#)

Mentioned in This Article

[Ala.](#) | [Alabama](#) | [Bosnia](#) | [Virginia](#) | [Nascar](#) | [Houston](#) | [East Hampton](#) | [New Jersey](#) | [New Hampshire](#) | [Richmond](#)

[INSIDE NYTIMES.COM](#)



ARTS »



[A Charismatic Exhibition](#)

ESCAPES »



[Outdoors Is the Way Up in Ogden, Utah](#)

ARTS »



[Romancing the Rose](#)

TimesSelect

Home Fires: One Year Later

Lee Kelley, an Iraq war veteran, on his one-year anniversary as a single civilian dad.

N.Y. / REGION »



[A Yoga Class in Times Square](#)

TimesSelect



[Warner: The Veil of French Politics](#)